

Congress, the class of 1994 changed the debate in Washington over our budget priorities. No longer do presidents project deficits as far as the eye can see. No longer do Senators and Congressmen spend billions first and ask questions later. No longer do politicians stuffed with trillions of dollars in tax revenue make the claim that another tax increase is needed to bring balance to the budget process.

Today, the values espoused by both parties center around fewer taxes, responsible spending, and a greater reliance on local authority.

Perhaps too few in Congress really believe Jefferson's statement that the government that governs least, governs best. But today, more than anytime in seventy-five years, politicians' fear of political retribution at the voting booth prevents them from casting America forth into a sea of red ink.

That simple political fact at the beginning of a new American century will be our lasting legacy.

My family, my friends, and my dedicated staff are owed my deepest gratitude on this night, as are the people of Florida's First Congressional District. They had the faith to send an untested 31-year old novice to Washington to represent their interests and views in Congress.

When I won my first campaign, I did so with the simple pledge that I would speak my mind, vote my conscience, and stand up and shout "no" when everyone was mindlessly saying "yes."

I kept my word, fought the good fight, and worked hard for the cause of less government and greater individual liberty.

Two hundred and twenty-five years later, that remains the legacy of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and our other founding fathers. And tonight, on the occasion of my retirement from this great institution, it is my hope that if anyone cares to remember my work here in the future as a footnote to some greater story, perhaps my legacy will be that I contributed in some small way to the elevation of the individual over the power of the state.

I may be leaving Congress, but I won't be silent. I will continue to fight for common sense values that all Americans understand. I feel passionate about many issues and I will continue to speak out and be heard.

I pray tonight that the Lord that George Washington prayed to during the Revolutionary War, and the God that Abraham Lincoln turned to during America's darkest hours, will continue to bless this great city on a hill that still shines brightly for all the world to see.

May God bless America!

HONORING JAKE KRAUS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor I would like to recognize Jake Kraus for his heroic efforts during World War II. His courage led to the liberation of thousands of half-starved American prisoners from the inhumane living conditions that they had been forced to endure.

Jake Kraus grew up on a farm in Pea Green, Colorado. Mr. Kraus was drafted into

the war and served as a tank driver under the command of General Eisenhower. The capture of the Ludendorf Bridge was due in part to Mr. Kraus and his Tank Destroyer Group, which in turn, opened the first permanent gateway to Berlin. This marked the defeat of Hitler's dream and the beginning of the long-awaited liberation of the American Prisoners of War.

Mr. Speaker, the service that Mr. Kraus gave our country will always be remembered by the soldiers whose lives he saved and by their families for the years to come. Even after putting his life on the line, Kraus insists that he did nothing heroic. But such a humble and brave individual deserves many accolades for his service to our country. It is with great admiration that I thank and congratulate Mr. Kraus for a job well done.

ON THE CELEBRATION OF JAMES N. GOLDSMITH'S SELECTION TO HEAD VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF AMERICA

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to an important milestone in the history of our nation's oldest veterans organization.

On Aug. 24, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States installed James N. Goldsmith of Lapeer, Michigan, as Commander-in-Chief. Even as I speak, veterans from around the state and across the nation are assembling in Harbor Springs, a beautiful community in my congressional district, to welcome Jim home and congratulate him on his great honor. He is the first National Commander elected from Michigan since 1943.

Jim has been active since 1967 as a member of the VFW. He served as All State Post Commander in 1974, and in 1977 he earned recognition as an All State and All American District Commander. In 1978 he was selected as Michigan's "Young Veteran of the Year," and in 1980 he became the first Vietnam veteran to be elected Department Junior Vice Commander. He earned All American status as a Department Commander, 1982-83.

He served in Vietnam as an engineer from April 1966 to August 1967. In his acceptance speech as National Commander-in-Chief, Jim made the fight against diabetes one of the key elements of his tenure, demonstrating that he will clearly articulate the concerns of Vietnam veterans. I trust that all our House colleagues are aware that diabetes is linked to Agent Orange, and that combat forces who were "in country" during the Vietnam War and now have diabetes may be eligible for monthly disability compensation benefits and VA health care.

Jim has also been back to Vietnam. While serving as Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, he was selected to travel there as part of a presidential fact-finding committee. On an earlier trip to Vietnam and Laos as VFW Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief, he participated in field efforts to recover the remains of missing U.S. service personnel.

The effort to account for missing combat individuals from past wars will remain one of the highest priorities of the VFW under Jim Gold-

smith. He has already announced a new VFW initiative called the "The VFW Reach Out for DNA Initiative" to help contact eligible donors of blood DNA.

The goal is to collect blood samples of all material relatives of World War II, the Korean War, Cold War, and Vietnam War casualties whose remains have not been recovered or identified. These samples will be sent to the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii to aid in such identification.

Mr. Speaker, I know that Jim Goldsmith will be a powerful spokesman for 1.9 million members of the VFW, for all our nation's veterans, for active-duty personnel and for their families. I know we will see Jim Goldsmith on Capitol Hill, speaking out in support of bills like H.R. 303, a bill that brings fairness and just compensation to military retirees who have a service-connected disability.

This weekend, as Michigan celebrates the selection of James Goldsmith to head the VFW, I ask you and our House colleagues to keep him in our thoughts and prayers, as he undertakes his vital task on behalf of all who served this nation so well.

HONORING CELIA DUNHAM ON BEING NAMED COLORADO TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2001

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Celia Dunham on being named Colorado Teacher of the Year 2001 by Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, and the Miss America Organization.

Celia Dunham, of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, teaches first grade at Strawberry Park Elementary. For her accomplishment, she will be presented \$2,500 in the name of Strawberry Park, and she will be considered for the national award.

Celia has taught full-time in the Steamboat School District since 1978. She is the first to explain that she has benefited from her kids by teaching them. She told Avi Salzman of The Steamboat Pilot that "their energy goes into me," and that, "It's what keeps me young." As any good teacher acknowledges, she also realizes that "she has learned an incredible amount from her kids."

Before entering consideration for the state competition, Celia first won the local competition, which was chosen from nominees entered by local Wal-Mart customers. For that honor, she received \$500 to use in her classroom. She was then entered into the statewide competition with 52 other candidates, where a panel of educational experts selected her as the winner. The contestants were chosen for their "rapport with students, student performance and teaching standards," said Wal-Mart Spokesman Rob Phillips.

Mr. Speaker, teachers provide a service vital to our Nation's youth. Celia has provided an excellent example for other teachers to follow. I would like to thank her for her dedication, and to congratulate her on being Colorado's Teacher of the Year.